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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KOLY](#) [CH](#)  
SUBJECT: BEIJING OLYMPICS: DISSIDENTS EXPERIENCE TIGHTER  
CONTROLS, "ENCOURAGEMENT" TO LEAVE BEIJING

REF: BEIJING 2593

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson.  
Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

#### Summary

1. (C) The Chinese Government has increased efforts to monitor and control dissidents in the run-up to the Olympics, which begin August 8. Olympics-related restrictions vary. Some high-profile dissidents, such as writer Yu Jie, have been placed under house arrest, while others have been warned to keep a low profile. All of the dissidents and activists with whom we spoke in recent days report that they have received a personal visit, or at least a phone call, from Ministry of State Security (MSS) agents. The MSS has been "encouraging" dissidents to leave Beijing. Zeng Jinyan, wife of jailed AIDS activist and rights defender Hu Jia, has been prohibited from granting interviews to foreign journalists, while other dissidents continue to give interviews. Most of our contacts expect tighter controls throughout the Olympics period, which may mean until the Paralympics end September 17. End Summary.

#### Controls on Dissidents Vary

2. (C) Dissidents and activists contacted by PolOff over the past seven days all report receiving visits or phone calls in July from Ministry of State Security (MSS) agents warning them against actions that could "damage the Olympics." The severity of controls placed on dissidents has varied on a case-by-case basis. Most of our contacts predicted monitoring of dissidents will increase as the August 8 Opening Ceremony draws near.

#### House Arrest for Some

3. (C) The wife of jailed rights defender Hu Jia, Zeng Jinyan, who herself has been under house arrest since 2007, is able to use the Internet, according to contacts. (Note: The last entry on her blog is dated July 29.) Her cell phone may be blocked, however. In two attempts to call Zeng (on July 28 and August 4), PolOff encountered an automated "this phone is power off" message.

4. (C) Police placed Yu Jie, a dissident writer and vice president of the Independent Chinese Pen Center, under house arrest July 31. Yu told PolOff August 4 that police have been guarding his home 24 hours a day. He is free to leave his apartment, but only if he allows police to drive him. The police drove Yu

and his wife to church on August 3. Yu said MSS agents visited him in early July to inform him that he would be under tighter control during the Olympics and to request his cooperation. Yu said this is the first time he has ever been placed under house arrest and he suspects Chinese authorities are fearful President Bush will try to meet with him while in Beijing. (Note: Yu was among a group of Chinese activists who met with President Bush in the White House in May 2006.) Unlike Zeng Jinyan, Yu Jie is able to accept foreign media interviews, and journalists have not been blocked from visiting his apartment.

#### Tighter Surveillance for Others

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15. (C) Other dissidents reported different levels of controls and surveillance. Liu Xiaobo, a writer who was jailed in 1989 for two years and again in 1996 for three years and who is now president of the Pen Center, told PolOff July 31 that MSS agents met with him July 28 and pressed him to spend the Olympics outside Beijing (with costs covered by the Government). After Liu refused, the "annoyed" MSS agent said if Liu remained in Beijing he could expect to be under 24-hour surveillance. Liu, whom PolOff met in a hotel coffee shop, pointed out PSB officers in the lobby who Liu said were assigned to monitor him. (Note: This surveillance was not noticeable in PolOff's previous two meetings with Liu this year in similar settings.) Despite this surveillance, Liu reported, he is free to move about and give interviews to foreign media.

16. (C) Tibetan poet and blogger Wei Se (aka "Woesser") and her husband, dissident writer Wang Lixiong, told PolOff August 4 that they have not experienced an increase in surveillance in the run-up to the Olympics. A Public Security Bureau officer is stationed outside the couple's apartment as usual, but they remain able to venture outside. Wei attributes these "relatively relaxed" controls to their plans to leave Beijing August 5 (for a trip to Gansu Province and possibly Lhasa, Tibet). Wei and Wang said they plan to be away from Beijing for the duration of the Olympics. MSS agents have phoned the couple twice and were pleased to learn that they would be leaving the capital, according to the couple. Wei Se asserted that the decision to take the trip was their own and not a response to official pressure. Wei said that she is free to grant interviews to foreign media and that reporters are able to visit her apartment without restriction. However, the MSS agents requested that she not talk to the media about her ongoing lawsuit against the Public Security Bureau in Changchun, Jilin Province, for denying her a passport. The MSS, Wei reported, indicated that a solution to her passport problem might be forthcoming after the Olympics. Wei is dubious, believing this is simply a tactic to get her to remain quiet during the Games.

17. (C) On July 28, labor activist Gao Hongming, who was released from prison in 2007 after serving nine years for "inciting subversion of state power," told LabOff that he had recently come under increased police surveillance. Gao said that as a result he had to cancel a meeting he previously requested with LabOff.

#### MSS Tells Other Activists to Lay Low

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18. (C) Democracy activist and liberal scholar Guo Yushan, the president of the independent think tank The Transition Institute, said MSS agents visited his office for much of the afternoon of July 17. During the meeting, the MSS insisted that the Institute cancel its weekly public forum sessions, which

frequently touch upon politically sensitive topics. Guo refused but has deliberately chosen less sensitive topics and speakers during the Olympics period. Guo said that the public security officer charged with guarding his housing complex must make daily reports to his superiors on Guo's movements. Guo plans to spend most of the Olympics in his hometown in Fujian Province, though he said he is not being forced to leave Beijing.

¶9. (C) Beijing-based Democracy activist Liu Anjun told PolOff that he, too, received a pre-Olympics visit from MSS agents who warned him to keep a low profile during the Games. Liu said he is allowed to venture from his apartment, unlike during the March session of the National People's Congress and the June visit by Secretary Rice to Beijing, both periods when Liu said he was under house arrest.

¶10. (C) PolOff spoke with Wang Yong, an activist based in Baotou, Inner Mongolia, July 30. Wang said in mid-July MSS agents warned him against meeting with foreigners, speaking to the media or leaving Baotou. Despite the warning, Wang said, he traveled to Xian, Shaanxi Province, without incident, though he speculated he would not be allowed to enter Beijing.

¶11. (C) Note: These attempts to control dissidents during this "sensitive period" are in line with other recent cases. In mid-July, Chinese authorities removed from Beijing (to neighboring Hebei Province) house church pastor Zhang Mingxuan and his wife after Zhang had an "unauthorized" meeting June 29 with visiting Congressmen (reftel). According to press reports, in Hebei Province "online" dissident Du Daobin was imprisoned, just before the end of his four-year probationary period August 4, for parole violations consisting of publishing essays on overseas websites and failing to report to police regularly. In another reported case, Ye Guozhu, jailed in 2004 for organizing protests against forced evictions related to the Olympics, was removed from prison on the eve of his scheduled July 23 release with no information on his whereabouts provided to his family.

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